



## RECOMMENDATION MEETING OF THE NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

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Project Number: 3015428

Address: 5601 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW

Applicant: Chad Lorentz, Urbal Architecture for Merrill Gardens

Date of Meeting: Monday, May 19, 2014

Board Members Present: Marc Angelillo  
Jerry Coburn  
David Neiman (Chair)  
Dale Kutzera

Board Members Absent: Ellen Cecil

DPD Staff Present: Beth Hartwick

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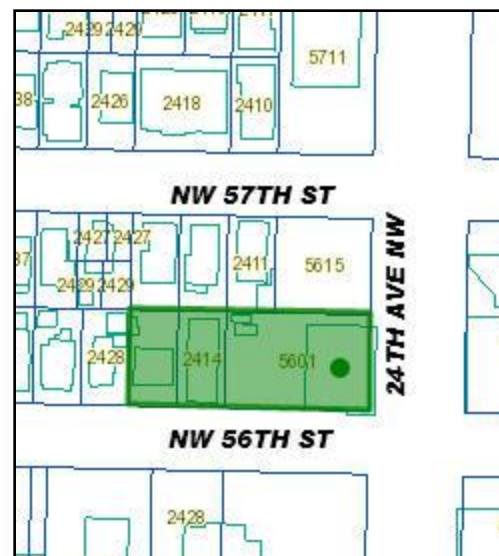
### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: NC3-65P (Neighborhood Commercial 3 – 65 pedestrian), NC3-65 and MR-RC (Midrise residential Commercial)

Nearby Zones: North: LR3, NC3-65P & NC3-65  
South: NC3-65P, NC3-65& C1-65  
East: NC3-65P & NC3-65  
West: MR-RC

Lot Area: 19,996 sq. ft.

Current Development: Along 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW is a one story commercial building. Along NW 56<sup>th</sup> St. is a parking lot, and two one story multi-family buildings.



Surrounding Development: Directly north of the site is a 6-story apartment building constructed in 2006, a two story apartment building constructed in 1964, and two single story small residential structures. To the east across 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW is a six story 90 unit apartment structure built in 2007. Directly to the west is a two-story single family residence that was built in 1900 or earlier. The owner is in the process of trying to get the house registered as a landmark. Across NW 56<sup>th</sup> St. to the south, a large seven-story mixed use development is under construction.

ECAs: None

Neighborhood Character: The project site is located near the core of the Ballard Municipal Center at a transition point between the denser mixed use development to the east and along 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW, and the surrounding lower density residential neighborhoods to the north and west. To the southwest are Ballard's primary commercial streets, NW Market St and the designated historic district along Ballard Ave. The Ballard Public Library and Ballard Commons Park are one block to the west.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for the design and construction of an assisted living facility with 105 units. The portion of the structure within the NC-65 zones will have seven stories and the portion within the MR-RC zone will have six stories. Parking below grade will provide 65 spaces with access off of NW 56th St. Approximately 3,700 sq. ft. of retail space will front along 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW.

## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: SEPTEMBER 16, 2013

## DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3015428) at this website:  
[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The EDG packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 3015428), by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing**    **Public Resource Center**  
**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000  
              P.O. Box 34019  
              Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:**    [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised during the public comment portion of the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Commented that the proposed design is an improvement from an earlier proposal for the site.
- Concerned about a canyon affect being created along NW 56<sup>th</sup> St.
- Encouraged setbacks along 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW as the street is being over built and the view of the sky is being blocked with projects that go right to the property line.
- Supportive of an assisted living facility being built in Ballard
- Encouraged the corner at 24<sup>th</sup> and 56<sup>th</sup> St. be softened.
- Concerned about the garbage pickup near the parking entry being an impact along NW 56<sup>th</sup> St.
- Encouraged the development to respect the garden to the west of the site, and would like to work with the applicant to make the garden available for use by future residents.
- Noted that NW 56<sup>th</sup> is being widened.
- Encouraged windows on the west façade respect privacy of single family residence to the west.
- Wanted to know when existing tenants will need to move out. (April 2014 earliest, more likely a year.)
- Encouraged the existing mosaic in the ROW be preserved. If needed it should be removed during construction and reinstalled when project is complete.
- Concerned about the relationship of the windows in the condo to the north and the proposed development. (The Board responded that this will be presented and reviewed at the Recommendation meeting.)
- Concerned about a large project transitioning from a commercial to a midrise zone and the precedent it will set.
- Encouraged the design effort to go beyond the sterile structures being built in Ballard.

## **PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

## **EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:**

1. **Relationship to adjacent structures:** The proposed development will be adjacent to an existing condo development in the NC-65 zoned portion of the site along 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW, a single family house to the west, and small apartment structures in the residential zone to the north. The Board expressed that the development will have an impact on the

surrounding neighbors. The Board acknowledged and supported the proposed setbacks beyond what the code requires, from the condo development at the upper levels and the single family residence to the west. (A-5, B-1)

- a. Continue to handle the zone transition with setbacks. (B-2)
  - b. Design and locate the fenestration to respect sightlines, especially in the NC zone. (A-5)
  - c. Locate the proposed roof deck back from the west and north building edges to protect privacy. (A-5)
2. **Relationship to surrounding context and streetscape:** The Board indicated that given the location of the site, and the different character of the two streets, the massing of the project at street level should be different between NW 56<sup>th</sup> St and 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW. (C-2)
  - a. Maintain the two story base and setback at the upper levels along NW 56<sup>th</sup> St. (A-2)
  - b. The exterior materials should be of high quality given the prominent corner location. (C-4)
  - c. Maintain a strong corner that is well detailed at 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW and NW 56<sup>th</sup> St. (A-10)
  - d. Consider providing residential uses at grade that can relate directly to the street along NW 56<sup>th</sup> St. (A-4)
3. **Landscaping:** Landscaping should be used as a buffer, or to reinforce design continuity, where appropriate. The Board acknowledged that landscaping will be an important aspect of how the project relates to the existing surrounding development. (E-2, A-5)
  - a. Provide a well landscaped buffer as part of the proposed patios within the north setbacks. (A-5)
  - b. Provide lower scale landscaping at the west that will not block solar access to the site. (E-2)
  - c. Explore merging the landscaping with the existing garden to the west of the site. (A-1, E-1)
4. **At the Recommendation meeting, the applicant should provide the following additional information:**
  - a. At the Recommendation meeting, the applicant should provide information about how the proposed fenestration lines up with the existing windows and balconies of the condo development to the north.
  - b. Show how the solid waste storage and pick up will work.
  - c. Provide a full materials board.
  - d. Provide proposed commercial lighting and signage.

#### **RECOMMENDATION MEETING: May 19th, 2014**

#### **DESIGN PRESENTATION**

The Recommendation packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number 3015428 at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The Recommendation packet is also available to view in the project file (project # 3015428), by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing Public Resource Center**

**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000  
P.O. Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

**PRESENTATION:**

The applicant presented that the windows between the street and the ground level lounge and library areas will be operable. Exterior materials will include fibre C reinforced concrete planks, with a visual variation which will be achieved by different sandblasting finishes of the planks. The memory care area will have cementitious lap siding. The base will include brick and a vinyl storefront.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- Clarified the setback between the proposed structure and the condo building to the north. [The proposed structure is setback 16' from the north property line and approx. 23' from the existing building.]
- Supported pavers to mark the location of the west property line.
- Concerned about a designated staff smoking area. [The applicant responded staff are not allowed to smoke on the job so there will be no such area.]
- Supported the existing trees along the north property line being protected during construction.
- Noted the exterior treatment of the memory care wing is different and of a lesser quality than the rest of the façade, and does not appear to be sympathetic to the interior use.

**PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

After considering the context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following design guidance.

**RECOMMENDATION GUIDANCE:**

**The Board complimented the applicant on the clarity of the packet and presentation. The Board was pleased with the design and encouraged the applicant to proceed with the proposal as presented at the Recommendation Meeting.**

1. **Relationship to Adjacent Structures:** The Board expressed appreciation for the generous setbacks provided where the NC3 zoned parcels abut and along the west property line. (A-5, B-1)
  - a. Continue to handle the zone transition with setbacks. (B-1)

2. **Relationship to Surrounding Context and Streetscape:** The Board encouraged the applicant to follow through with the well-modulated, architecturally consistent design presented. (C-2)
  - a. Maintain the presented scale of the streetscape. (A-2)
  - b. Maintain the vocabulary of the “wood style” exterior reinforced concrete planks. The Board discussed the color of the materials but gave no direction.(C-4)
  - c. The Board recommended preservation of the “State St.” mosaic located in the sidewalk at the corner of 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW and NW 56th St. At the EDG meeting the public had requested the street art be protected during construction and preserved in its current location.

**The Board identified the following Citywide Design Guidelines of highest priority and expressed the project, as presented, was successfully meeting these guidelines.**

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| <b>A. Site Planning</b> |
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| <p><b>A-1</b>    <b><u>Responding to Site Characteristics.</u></b> The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.</p> <p><b>A-2</b>    <b><u>Streetscape Compatibility.</u></b> The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.</p> <p><b>A-4</b>    <b><u>Human Activity.</u></b> New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.</p> <p><b>A-5</b>    <b><u>Respect for Adjacent Sites.</u></b> Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.</p> <p><b>A-10</b>   <b><u>Corner Lots.</u></b> Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.</p> |
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| <b>B. Height, Bulk and Scale</b> |
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| <p><b>B-1</b>    <b><u>Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility.</u></b> Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.</p> |
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| <b>C. Architectural Elements and Materials</b> |
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| <p><b>C-1</b>    <b><u>Architectural Context.</u></b> New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.</p> |
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- C-2 **Architectural Concept and Consistency.** Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.
- C-4 **Exterior Finish Materials.** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.
- C-5 **Structured Parking Entrances.** The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

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| <b>D. Pedestrian Environment</b> |
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- D-1 **Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances.** Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.
- D-2 **Blank Walls.** Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.
- D-6 **Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas.** Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.
- D-9 **Commercial Signage.** Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.
- D-10 **Commercial Lighting.** Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.
- D-11 **Commercial Transparency.** Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.

## E. Landscaping

- E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites.** Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.
- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site.** Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Recommendation meeting (the final Board meeting), the following departure was requested

- 1. Residential Setbacks. (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3):** The Code requires, for a structure containing a residential use that abuts the rear lot line of a lot in a residential zone a 15' setback for portions of the structure above 13' in height and an additional setback at the rate of 2' for every ten feet of height above 40'. The applicant proposed a portion of the structure approximately 50' in length to encroach up to 5' into the required setback for the portion of the building above 40' in height.

This departure would provide an overall design that would better meet the intent of Design Review Guidelines A-5 and C-2. The Board indicated they were willing to grant this departure as the structure is providing adequate setbacks from the existing development in the NC zone and the departure will allow for architectural consistency of the proposed design and development.

The Board voted unanimously to grant this departure.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations summarized below was based on the design review packet dated May 19, 2014 and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the May 19, 2014 Design Recommendation Meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the materials, the four Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design.

The following are the Board's Recommendations:

1. Preserve the existing "State St." mosaic located in the sidewalk at the corner of 24<sup>th</sup> Ave NW and NW 56<sup>th</sup> St.